

WILD BEASTS HIS FRIENDS.

The Queer Stories Told About a Pioneer Washington Rancher.

Among some visitors to Seattle the other day was Peter Gallagher, a rancher living three miles from Renton, says the Seattle Press-Times. Mr. Gallagher is one of the pioneers of the sound country, and has lived on the same place for twenty years or more, taking up a quarter section as a homestead from the government. By years of hard toil he has cleared up and improved a splendid place, which, though secluded from the outside world, is a model ranch, of which the owner is justly proud. Mr. Gallagher is not given to hunting and does not molest wild game of any kind, and to this may be ascribed the tameness of a number of animals which make the woods in that vicinity a home. One of these, a black bear, has for a year visited his stockyard almost daily and eaten with the cattle, lying down among the calves and displaying neither fear nor ferocity. Mr. Gallagher goes among the stock and frequently passes within two or three feet of his bearship, not only in the yard but in the woods. He pays no attention to the bear and the latter never offers to molest him—or the contrary, eats with evident satisfaction pieces of bacon and other scraps from the table that are thrown out to him. The bear is a handsome three hundred pound fellow and appears to enjoy the company of the cattle.

Other pets are a pair of fawns that run around with the young stock on the place, eating with the calves and lying down among them as contented as though with their own kind. They evidently come from the vicinity of Cedar lake, where considerable hunting is done and from which section game is being driven. Mr. Gallagher says he had rather part with the best cow on his place than one of the fawns. This is the second time fawns have taken up their abode at this place, the first pair coming there about five years ago and remaining with his stock for two years, even going into the stable and being locked up over night. He gave them to a neighbor, who in turn presented them to friends at Snohomish and up the Skagit. This sound fishy, but not only is it vouched for, but it is further said that wild ducks and geese alight in his yard and show no fear in his presence, though the appearance of a stranger is the signal for flight. Mr. Gallagher never hunts and will not allow hunting on his place nor interference in any way with his pets, either quadrupeds or winged.

A COMET COMING.

Splendid Traveler Due to Come Within Human Vision in 1911.

Halley's comet is coming back, the comet which in the year 1066 shed a celestial splendor over the Norman conquest and whose terror-inspiring visit was commemorated by the hand of Queen Matilda in the Bayeux tapestry; the comet that in 1456, the year of the battle of Belgrade, scared the Turk and Christian alike and was anathematized by a bull from the pope; the comet whose strange scimitar form

still chilled the marrow of the ignorant and superstitious at its latest return in 1835.

It is yet far away, says the Chicago Times, but the eye of science sees it, already within the orbit of Neptune, rushing sunward and earthward with constantly increasing velocity as it falls along the steep curve of its orbit. And a call to arms, a call for preparation, has just been issued from one of the chief watch towers of astronomy. Prof. Glasenapp announces that the computing bureau established by the Russian Astronomical society has undertaken the calculation of the true path of Halley's comet with a view to predicting the exact date of the next return. He hopes that astronomers acquainted with unpublished observations of the comet will communicate the information to the society.

After its perihelion the comet was watched retreating out into space until May, 1881, when it was finally swallowed from sight. It will be in perihelion again about 1911, but with the great telescopes now in existence and the greater ones that may then have been constructed it is probable that the comet will be detected coming sunward a year or more earlier than that. The fact that the labor of computing the precise time of its return is already about to begin gives assurance that the next time it will not be a question of how many days but rather of how many hours or even minutes the calculations will be in error.

A Wonderful Violin.

David Johnson, of Alliance, O., has in his possession probably the oldest violin in America. The instrument has been a family relic for many years, having been the property of Johnson's father, Ellis N. Johnson, the centenarian who died a few years ago. The violin is a very handsome piece of woodwork, the rim around it having been cut from thick wood and richly carved. On the stem is carved a bust of one of the old-time masters. On the back, in inlaid work, is a design representing one of the ancient towns of Italy, while the keys are mounted with pearls. The instrument has a very rich, deep tone, but cannot be tuned to any of the violins now manufactured. It is almost an exact counterpart of the famous Mojetta violin, and has been handled by some of the finest musicians of the land. Around the edge is a Latin inscription signifying: "Whilst living I was in the woods for God, but dying I passed away into a sweet death." The exact age of the violin is not known, but exceeds two centuries and possibly four.

An Ingenious Rain Producer.

A rainmaker in India has an apparatus, consisting of a rocket capable of rising to the height of a mile, containing a reservoir of ether. In its descent it opens a parachute, which causes it to come down slowly. The ether is thrown out in fine spray, and its absorption of heat is said to lower the temperature about it sufficiently to condense the vapor and produce a limited shower.

FOREST RESERVES.

The Government Becoming Interested in the Important Question.

The action of the federal government in setting apart certain large tracts of the public forest lands in the west as "reserves" was outlined recently in these columns. Likewise, the value of these vast forests was referred to in their relation to the great irrigating systems of the west and their utility in supplying future timber demands. As therein remarked, the mere creating of these reserves was but an incomplete measure, unless some permanent system of federal forestry was also soon adopted. At present the reserves are under the control of the land office of the department of the interior, subject only to such limited care as its agents can bestow, which is slight.

Last summer the army was sought by the secretary of the interior for details to protect from depredations some of the reserves. The acting judge advocate gave an opinion that it was not lawful to employ troops upon such duty unless expressly directed by congress. Under this decision it seems that the details that have hitherto guarded, except during the winter months, the Yellowstone, Yosemite, Sequoia and Gen. Grant parks will be withheld this year.

A bill now before congress in reference to the public forests authorizes the secretary of war to furnish details of troops upon requisition of the secretary of the interior to protect these reservations. But why not carry the subject a step further, as has been suggested by forest advocates, and reach the heart of the question? Substitute a bill placing the public forests that are withdrawn from public entry by settlers absolutely under the control of the army. Commence at the beginning and make forestry a department at West Point, with a portion of the conveniently situated highlands as an experimental station. Provide for assigning a portion of the graduates of the academy each year to command a specially enlisted forestry guard to carry out a system of scientific and practical forestry upon these reservations. It is ventured to predict, the more this plan is considered, the more one will find in it a simple and logical solution of a pending vital question. It furnishes a new field of activity to the army; it insures fidelity to the national interests. It would give permanency and capability at once to the forestry system.

To Make Pulled Bread.

Tear the crust from a part of a loaf of baker's bread. Now tear the crumb of the loaf into long, thin pieces. Spread the torn bread in a pan and put in a hot oven to become brown and crisp. It will take about fifteen minutes. Serve hot with cheese. Pulled bread is also nice with chocolate or coffee.

Regarding Ostrich Plumes.

In each wing of the ostrich twenty-six long white plumes grow to maturity in eight months. In the male these are pure white, while those of the female shade to cerise or gray.